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Letter dated 23 July 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement on the peace process in Liberia, issued on 21 July 2003 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of this letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Marcello **Spatafora**
Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 23 July 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Statement on the peace process in Liberia issued on 21 July 2003 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union

The European Union stresses the importance of strict adherence to the ceasefire agreement signed in Accra on 17 June 2003 by the Government of Liberia and representatives of the rebel groups LURD and MODEL.

The European Union reiterates its strong support for the ECOWAS-led peace negotiations and its commitment to sustain a comprehensive peace agreement for Liberia. It calls on all parties to sign such a peace agreement without delay in order to allow the return of peace and stability to the country and the end of more than 13 years of conflict, which have caused immense suffering to the Liberian people.

The European Union calls attention to the gravity of the humanitarian situation in Liberia and the urgent need to provide assistance. It reminds the signatories of the ceasefire agreement of their obligation to respect international humanitarian law, respect human rights, ensure that humanitarian initiatives are protected and allow unimpeded access to territory under their control for humanitarian actors.

The European Union stresses the importance of an early deployment of the interposition force/international stabilization force. This must be accompanied by President Taylor immediately stepping down.

The European Union stands ready to consider support for such a force.

The acceding countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, the associated countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey and the EFTA countries members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this statement.